



# KEY NOTE

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**SUBS**  
Cheques etc. to FISTS C.W. CLUB.  
N. America to WZ8C, others to HQ.  
UK: £5, EEC: £6, Europe: £7  
N. America: \$15.00, others: £10.  
**LISTS**  
Call v Name/Number. Stamp plus SAE.  
**CLUB BADGES: £1.50**

**NETS**  
Sunday: 0930 & 1430 on 7029. G0IIK  
Sunday: US 2000Z on 14058. KC4UJG  
Saturday: US QRQ Net 1000 EST on 7040-045  
Saturday: US 1100 EST on 14.058 NP2GP  
DX 7/14/21/28.058 on the hour for 15mins  
Pse keep watch all Novice allocations  
UK Net Controls use GX0IPXP

## Listings

Up-dated listings may be obtained from N8IAG. Pse send SASE.

## NA FISTS QSL BURO

N. A. QSL Manager: N8FU - John Hugentober, 4441 Andreas Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45211. Pse SASE

## SUBS

Your renewal date is printed on your mailing label.

## THOSE MYSTERY PLATES

The enquiry from last month (N5ZYR) resulted in the following information from our SWL Wyne Davies: J.E. Albright, owner of the Company, was the agent of Horace Martin, the inventor of the vibroplex semi-automatic bug key. Albright eventually acquired Martin's Company which was administered by the Albright family until the lat 1970's.

There were so many competitors to Martin's keyer (for which he held the patents) that Albright permitted them to use their illegal bugs upon inspection and payment of a \$2.00 fee. Subsequent to this payment, a plate was affixed to the instrument permitting it's use. These plates were inscribed:

This machine is not guaranteed nor made  
but only licensed by

J.E. Albright.

233 Broadway, New York.

Special No. ....

This same information was later to arrive from G4FAI and Tony indicates that the "inspection" noted above to ensure that the instrument met Western Union standards, was capable of clean sending with no split dots and was capable of making eleven dots per second (comparable to Vibroplex).

Gwyn points out that it was 233 Broadway and not 253 and suspects that the bug mentioned by N5ZYR is probably one of the illegal ones granted a special licence by Albright. However, Tony concurs with the inscription affixed to N5ZYR's key and gives the company address as 253 Broadway.

N5ZYR also makes mention of a J-38 type key with mica insulators which prompts the following info (also from Wyne):

The J-38 type key with mica insulators is similar to the Bunnel Triumph key design and has "Thompson Levering" stamped onto the shorting bar. T. Levering is a little known Company from Philadelphia. Other similar keys were made by Western Union and some collectors think that it was the Bunnel Company who made them all and caused the various Companies names to be stamped upon the shorting bar under licence. This key is relatively scarce in the U.S. and whilst Wyne holds one in his collection he is aware of only one other US collector who has one. The key is described as an "oval brass key, steel lever legless type" and Wyne would be happy to undertake a little swapping if N5ZYR (possibly other collectors also) are interested.

## QSL CARDS

I finally managed to get rid of the backlog. A number of orders were processed previously but something went awry with the guillotine and some 50% of the cards were cut out of plonk. Just when I was getting on top of things, the toner pack in the laser decided it had had enough and started leaving nasty streaks and missing patches so I have had to replace this. Taking into account VAT, they cost over 60.00 and although they are good for several thousand normal pages, their life is finite hence the reason I ask you to donate an extra stamp for any printing work (listings etc). The laser up to now has operated trouble free for some 4 years but I fear that it will soon be in need of a service. The question is do I get it serviced or upgrade to a more versatile model. A postscript laser will undoubtedly enhance photographic images etc but they are quite costly. I will review the situation shortly.

## DXPEDITION THE GAMBIA

Mary, G0BQV writes to advise that she is joining the above which has been organised by the Whitton ARC. Mary and another FISTS member (G4KLF) will be amongst the nine amateurs in the group and they will

be using the call **C56DX** over the weekend 29/30 Oct for the CQWW contest. In the meantime, she will be on the key as much as possible and looking for G stations particularly.

### **EUCW Fraternising CW QSO party**

19-20 Nov 1994.

19 Nov

1500-1700 utc

7.010 - 7.030

14.020 - 14.050

1800-2000 utc

7.010 - 7.030

3.520 - 3.550

20 Nov

0700-0900 utc

7.010 - 7.030

1000-1200 utc

7.010 7.030

14.020 - 14.050

#### **Classes:**

- A Members of EUCW clubs using more than 10W input
- B Members of EUCW clubs using QRP (less than 10W input)
- C Non-members of EUCW using any power
- D SWLs

#### **Exchanges:**

- Class A and B: RST/QTH/NAME/CLUB/Membris No.
- Class C RST/QTH/NAME/NM (i.e. not a member)
- Class D Log information from both stations

#### **Scoring:**

- Class A/B/C 1 point per QSO with own country,  
3 points per QSO with another Eu Country
- Class D 3 points for each complete logged QSO

#### **Multipliers All Classes:**

- 1 multiplier point for each EUCW Club worked/logged per day and band

#### **EUCW clubs are:**

- AGCW-DL, BENELUX-QRP, BTC (BELGIUM),  
CTCW (PORTUGAL),  
EHSC (Extremely High Speed Club), FISTS, FOC,  
G-QRP,  
HACWG (HUNGARY), HCC (SPAIN), HSC, SHSC,  
SLDXC (GERMANY)  
UCWC (RUSSIA), UFT (FRANCE), U-QRQ-C  
(RUSSIA), VHSC,

Logs to include: Date, Time(utc), Band, Call, Info sent, Info received and points claimed per QSO

Summary to include: Call, Address, Total points claimed, Station details, Power used and signature.

### **G3PPD AND THE INSECT**

A couple of weeks ago the PSU went down and took the insect with it. Horses for Courses I thought and parcelled it back to Stuart for attention. Glad I did; it came back much improved and with a couple of mods to bring it up to the EMC RFI requirements. The improvements mean that the filter now resolves signals down as far as some -120db in laboratory tests and should exhibit a reduction in distortion also. To be honest, I have been unable to make an assessment because within 45 minutes of the instrument coming through the door, it was on its way out again on loan to Ernie whose need is greater than mine since he has only a standard SSB filter in his 101ZD. Stuart is still at the suck-it-and-see stage of the mods but when all has been satisfactorily sorted out, I will be offering further advice to those with the earlier Insect filters. I did make mention of the digital filters and the Rad-com review. Stuart pointed out that they tested only the rejection properties of the Insect against the DSB filter rather than testing their comparative sensitivities. All Insects can resolve signals from -100dBm (this is TEN S points down from 599) with current ones going as low as -117dBm.

Because it offers gain, Stuart finds well heeled Amateurs running the mighty **W9GR** digital processor and an on-board 200Hz filter are still following this with the Insect to compensate for the insertion losses.

### **GREETINGS**

What on earth is happening to the weather? Here in the UK we have been experiencing conditions which vary between deep winter and an Indian summer. The trees are tenaciously hanging on to their leaves both fully green and yellowing. This week I was bothered by an over inquisitive wasp who - considering recent temperatures - should have been concerned with other things and on a recent shopping expedition I dressed in coat and scarf in view of the 8c temperature and less than an hour later found myself regretting it when the glass shot up to 18c. The 80m band continues to misbehave with weak and watery G signals (the main reason I use 80) losing out against S9+ from deep in Europe. What puzzles me however is the number of these stations who return to my QRP CQ call (8 watts to a trapped dipole) giving me 599 and unashamedly confessing to running 100 watts. I can not in all honesty credit them with the same report but the thing is that under these circumstances I am well within the QRP segment. Biggest culprits were Germany and Italy though there was also one "G" station.

Talking of QRP, the club recently attended a lecture at Jodrell Bank (home of the Lovell Radio Telescope) and were told how a lost US satellites signal was separated from the noise. Considering it was 250M miles away and running 1 watt some-one somewhere is surely worthy of the distinction of the greatest ratio of

miles per watt. Hi.

**G0GXQ** told me one evening of his plans to spend a week in the Lake District and I worked him the very next evening signing /m from Haweshead. 449 was not bad considering QRP from an indifferent whip. Congratulations to Brook who previously held the call **G7HJA** and is now recognised as **G0VEB**. From the grape vine, others are aiming for their full ticket also and we have a SWL who has decided to take out a novice licence as **2E0AIR**.

The locals are abuzz with the 80m mag loop that has appeared on my verandah. Ever tried explaining something like this to the uninitiated? One of 'em took the biscuit however as he thought I was using it to train roses on it next spring !!!

## THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

**G4KEW**. Hi Bob. Dedicated separates can be coupled to transceive for the convenience of SSB operation in which case, the tx will adopt the rx vfo. As separates proper, the rx muting circuit is connected to the tx switch so that it is deprived of the antenna input when tx is activated (frequently an attenuator is also brought into circuit). To net with such a set up, tune the wanted station to a null and then activate the tx vfo (not necessarily the tx) and tune this also to a null. From that point on your tx is spot on QRG and you can tune the rx with freedom. **G0BUR**. Ray's daughter is having problems selling her house in order to buy his so he currently has two houses on the go. The new property is circa 1932 and a planned extension now has a roof and floorboards waiting to be laid whenever the plumber can be coaxed away from the Golf Course. **G0FVS**. Jim's latest pupil has passed his cw test and despite living some 15m distant, both he and his wife turned up with a bouquet for his boss. Used to get the same thing Jim (though often the local watering hole was primed with a few pints) but I guess they mean to thank the xyl for putting up with eccentrics. Hi. Your call in procedure on the 2m QRS net is perfectly valid. I used to call on 144.050 with the rider "QSX 070" to which the rx vfo was tuned and acknowledgements made on this QRG. **PA0HZH**. Hi Huub and vmt the odds. His son, a professional Marine, successfully passed the marine code exam and Huub reassures that the Dutch Marines at least are still practising the code. Huub has a daughter living in London and often visits. Little late for October Huub but I will formulate a list of members\callsigns in the London area for your future visits. I have to respect the wishes of those members who indicate that they do not wish their telephone numbers to be publicised though. Huub has a hang up on British Symphony music. He has a large collection and equates those who do not "hear through" the music with those who do not comprehend the code. **GM3HEN**. Tony reiterates what has been stressed so often - operators should periodically record plain text and mixed groups to a cassette and later

listen to it. They may well be in for a shock. Hi. **G3WP**. Jack relates to me since his wife has also had a stroke. She has no movement in her left arm and has partly lost the use of her left leg though still managing to get around. The stroke occurred on Easter Sunday 1990 which is the date that the "poll tax" was thrust upon us. Could there be a connexn I wonder? Ever since, Jack has been head cook and bottle washer and has needed to expand his cooking skills from frying eggs to much more elaborate operations. **SV2JAX**. Glad you managed to work old Louis (**G5RV**) Paco. Insufficient time to ask the members about the articles you wanted so have got the RSGB to do the photocopying for you. Sri but you owe me 3.50 (the RSGB charge) but there is no sweat. Paco joins the M/V Nea Doxa on 4 Oct but no suitable tx aboard so he is huntin' for a used tcvr. **DL6UDX**. Wolf was unfortunate enough to find a hole in the postal service and his rubber stamp has gone astray. Getting you another one made Wolf. **G0TIP**. George couldn't wait for Bob so he sent a QSL direct for his QSO with HQ on his mag loop. See you managed to get the club logo on there George. Hi. **G0PDM** is another one of the impatient brigade so again, VMT the QSL Mike. **G0AHJ**. The fascination of the computer is getting to Derek at the cost of his operating time. No mate. There are no points for compuserve contacts. Cheek! **G4OTN**. Colin's grey cells are running on a par with my own - he forgot to sign his cheque. An Elmer per **G4RSK** was sent but inadvertently (grey cells again) the originator of the previous award (**G0EEJ**) was not ammended. Sri. **G4RWP**. Got some awful scrawl on a bit of real classy stationery here (Island Shangri-La Hong Kong) but he has heard from Ali - **G4OJW (ST2AA)** who's cw activity is confined to 21.371 (rock bound) twixt 1400z and 1500z. Ali is struggling manfully with Malaria currently but this problem is nothing compared to his working condx of 5w into a dipole up 6 feet! I too am concerned re your other observation Eddie. **G0REA** Roma offers a nomination for the Elmer award and I understand that she is enjoying the peace and quietfulness of her new home. Running with a **G5RV**, her skeds with **GM3GG** (40M 1200 Mon and Fri) have been virtually solid but those with her sister far less reliable.

## LUMLEY RALLY

**G0CEK**, Fred, dropped me a line some time ago indicating that he was prepared to put on a stand at the above venue and I suggested that in view of my disgraceful memory, he should remind me a little nearer the time when I would make spare Keynotes etc available to him. Fred seemingly suffers the same kind of memory as myself and went to the trouble of having a number of leaflets and app forms photo copied and went about the business of preparing the display. He thwarted the endeavours of Raynet to hide his display and pinned up the logo in a prominent place. He was fortunate to have a friend who turned up with

a collection of keys which (being mainly home brewed) caused quite a bit of interest. Two of these came in for particular scrutiny, one being an old relay movement with a paddle in the centre of it and the other a pump handle fashioned from an old window latch. If Fred can get a piccy of these, I would like to reproduce 'em in Keynote. The junior op entered into the spirit of things and at one point manned that stand whilst Fred went hunting for bargains but the end of the day saw 120 leaflets and 60 app forms distributed but sadly, no FISTS members to sign in.

## MORSE TUTORIAL ON DISC

Ralph, ZL2AOH sent a disc with a morse tutorial by ZL1AN (Gary). is available for distribution from HQ entirely free but please include return postage. I must confess a little confusion when I attempted to run it because the .BAT file included in the required directory (CW) makes assumptions that either GWBASIC or QBASIC is located in a subdirectory C:\DOS\BASIC. In fact, with later versions of MS-DOS, a help file is called up with the magic word "help" which in turn calls QBASIC and expects to find this in the \DOS directory. It is therefore necessary to modify the batch file accordingly. Once it is up and running however it is an excellent piece of software utilising the Farnsworth approach which introduces extended inter-character spacing. The program permits a wide variation in this spacing whilst at the same time permitting you to alter both speed and pitch; all on the fly. A number of text files are available which are run on demand whilst random characters may also be generated. I found the pitch variation useful since the default 750Hz is barely audible on the computers internal speaker. The author has placed it in the public domain so it may be copied for distribution amongst your club members etc with the proviso that it is distributed without modification. For those whose knowledge of computers is limited, let me know the location of your QBASIC or GWBASIC interpreter and I will explain the fix. A bonus here is that the software permits the computer to read incoming cw and also (with suitable interface) send it via your tx. Ralph also included the schematic of both input and output interfaces for those who are so inclined. These I will retain in a safe place (what's the betting I forget where "safe" is) for photocopying as required. VMT Ralph.



73 es GL  
de Geo - G3ZQS

## NORTH AMERICAN MEMO



by WZ8C - Ms. Nancy Kott  
P.O. Box 47  
Hadley, Michigan 48440-0047  
WZ8C @ KF8JS.#NEMI.MI.USA.NA  
Phone : 1-810-797-5388

Hello North American FISTS! Is just great the way FISTS activity has increased in North America. The number of FISTS sponsoring new FISTS has increased tremendously, as well as publicity we are getting from other publications like TSARC, QRP Quarterly, and I recently received a request for information to print in a new Coast Guard magazine! This is resulting in many new members. I can remember way back when, there were only 11 North American FISTS. I have a feeling that more and more hams are getting disgruntled with no-code, ARRL, the FCC and are looking for a solution. I hope FISTS can have a loud voice in keeping meaningful standards and traditions alive in our beloved hobby. Vince WB2EZG is actively involved in this, if you are interested in writing letters to the powers that be, or helping in some other capacity, drop Vince a note and let him know.

We are also trying to get a CW column back in QST and World Radio magazines. Pete K8OUA is spearheading the QST campaign, and Joe AA8HV is tackling World Radio. We may need FISTS to band together next month for a postcard writing campaign to these magazines. I think we all would like to see a CW column back in the magazines and would get behind such an effort.

I'm going to Phoenix Oct 28, and will be back Nov 2. I hope to have this ready for the printers before I leave, so it will be printed by the time I return home. Then I can CFSAnS (collate, fold, stuff, address and stamp, hi!) and have it in the mail the first week of November. If this issue is late, you'll know it was because I didn't get it to the printer on time! I still think we're doing good if it's in your mailbox by the end of the month, hi! But I am trying to aim for a more timely delivery.

Here's your November Memo:

## FISTS QSL CARDS

They are finally here, as you noticed when you opened your envelope! Many thanks to Dave **KY2R** for volunteering to create the card and following it thru to the printing. Lots of FISTS have inquired about a club card, and we hadn't done anything since our last group order about 4 years ago. These cards are to be individually ordered direct to the printer, using the enclosed order blank. It is my understanding that the cards are available in a variety of pastel colors, even though there isn't a space on the order blank for color choice. (Unless I overlooked it!). Those FISTS who are familiar with the original card designed in England will notice that the text on the back of the card is basically the same, just "Americanized", hi! Good job, Dave, thanks very much!

## FEEDBACK

This is a letter written in response to the Feedback comments made by Vince **WB2EZG** in the October KeyNote. The author wishes to remain unnamed - I found it to be thought provoking, I'm printing it in hopes of generating some more discussion/action among more FISTS:

"I have just finished reading Vince's letter in the Feedback section of the Keynote. I am writing this letter in regard to the "establishing a statement of policy" which you mention in the last paragraph.

Technology is tying the hands of the amateur of yesterday who built and repaired his own rigs. How many hams would open up their hand-held transceiver to effect a repair? Or worse yet, attempt to build such a unit? Modern technology requires factory assembly, and even the basic principles of many circuits contained on the boards outstrip the amateurs willingness to understand. Remember, the typical amateur is a **hobbyist**, who has little time to devote to understanding technical electronics. The understanding of electronic circuitry is rapidly moving solely into the domain of the computer-assisted, graduate engineer. The role of the ham is completely changing to one that works at a system level, an operational level.

In my opinion, the only sensible "statement of policy" that might be established is one in which ham radio will provide a pool of technical talent which is defined differently from the present definition. The new technical talent should be defined as the technical talent need for modern communications: computer literacy, and state-of-the-art communication systems and techniques.

Instead of reciting Ohm's Law and drawing a block diagram of a superheterodyne, an exam requirement will be to draw a block diagram of a computer's innards, or a diagram of a communications network and explain its layers, or to demonstrate keyboard skills. The idea is to produce a pool of talent capable of being integrated into a modern communication network in an emergency situation, with only a short training period. For the army, there will be a pool of talent capable of using high tech operating skills at battalion, company, and platoon levels, just as the CW ham ops did in WWII, using 1940's technology.

With the inroads computers are making (the Information Superhighway, Internet, E-mail etc) the next 5 to 10 years will bring significant changes to ham radio. It's going to be a whole new ball game with 3/4 of a million hams wanting to play. I think the main problem for amateur radio will be that the huge influx of new members (who have no allegiance to anything and have different social needs) will put the hobby in risk of disintegration.

New people coming into ham radio are more interested in communication rather than in radio per se. They are more interested in people and personalities.

## NOVICE FREQUENCIES

Charlie **KA8OQF** asks what spots are good for finding US ham Novices and the DX equivalents. Good question Charlie! We've been trying to establish a set of slow speed FISTS calling frequencies without much success. Let's hear from those who use the Novice frequencies, both Elmers and Novices. Where do you hang out? I'll print it in the masthead of the KeyNote so we will be able to find you. And DX slow-speeders, where can we find you?

## ELMER AWARD

Geo has sent the computer program for making Elmer Awards to me, and I think I have a handle on it now. So, if you have a special someone you would like to thank for being there while you were learning the ropes, you can send the request to me rather than across the pond. This should save on postage both ways. There is no charge for the Elmer Award, but a 52 cent stamp would be appreciated.

## CENTURY AWARD

Questions are coming in regarding the Century Award - I guess it doesn't hurt to run the info every couple of months for the benefit of the new FISTS, and those who may suddenly find themselves motivated to give it a try!

Anyone can earn the Century Award. Therefore, FISTS you worked before you joined the club can count toward your Century Award total. If a contact was a FISTS member at the time of your QSO, it counts toward your total, even if the person becomes a Silent Key or decides to leave the club by the time you are ready to submit your log.

DX QSOs are 2 points. NA QSOs are 1 point. Canada USA, USVI, are local. DX = Europe, Asia, Puerto Rico British VI and South America.

When they work CW, they give their age, occupation, and talk about what they are currently doing when out of the shack. Back in the 1940's this was not the case; more impersonal technical talk was the norm. When the newcomers are at the keyboard, they write personal multi-page letters to other's mailboxes. They love computers and high-tech operations, and are willing to invest \$\$\$ into their station setups, which involve almost no "homemade" stuff. They have little or no sense of ham radio history and the struggles to keep ham radio alive in the years between WWI and WWIII. Since they have no "roots" and no particular interest in radio, it would not be surprising if they switched, in a few years, to easily obtainable AT&T fiber-optic land lines, and organize their own Ham-U-Serve system, including video and who-knows-what-else.

Take a look at the Sept, 94 issue of QST, bearing in mind that (for good or ill) the ARRL is a potent force at work in amateur radio.

How do they announce the 1995 edition of the "Ham's Bible" on pages 18/19? The main picture in the ad and on the bible's cover shows a man operating a computer - not a rig, a *computer with no rig in sight*. In the paragraph below the picture it touts, "...the complex, powerful digital techniques that will define Amateur Radio communications into the next century."

When we turn to page 43 of the same issue, we find the ARRL telling us how to go "cruising the ARRL HW on the Info Superhighway". ARRL believes that complex, powerful digital techniques will define amateur radio into the next century - where does that leave simple error-prone CW?

The ARRL is making it plain that it is promoting high-tech communication, it cajoles the old guard with articles and sweet talk about CW, but it is predicting a different future for ham radio. As we have seen from past dealing with the FCC, they have ruses to evade individual petitions. What is left? As goes the ARRL, so goes ham radio.

I think the most effective statement of policy would be to court the Armed Forces with the knowledge that in a military emergency, ham radio is ready to provide a pool of trained computer ops who can touchtype a computer keyboard, who have practical experience in networking, who are familiar with software and hardware through operation of their own equipment, and who will be quick to adapt to any military communication system. That will take care of 97.1

That, I think, is what the ARRL is aiming for, and that will save our ham bands. As far as CW is concerned, it will be allowed to operate freely...until it is QRMed out of existence by the "complex, powerful digital techniques that will define Amateur Radio into the century." 73,

I. M. Lumpy

## Traffic Demystified Continues

I don't know the exact number of messages that travel back and forth across the nation over the National Traffic System each year, but it's in the many thousands. To get an idea of the number just check the ARRL Field Organization Forum in each month's QST, and in each section report you'll find a listing of the amount of traffic handled for each net for the month. If you read the section reports carefully, you'll find that there really is a large volume of traffic that is handled through amateur radio nets each month. In July, 1994, for example, the six Ohio section NTS nets passed almost a thousand pieces of traffic. A lot of this was duplicate traffic, that is traffic that went through a couple of nets on its way to its destination, but if we halve that total we end up with 500 pieces of traffic for the month. Ohio is a large section, so let's say that the average for all sections is 300 pieces of traffic per month. Multiply 300 by 77 sections and we end up with something like 23000 pieces of traffic in one month on the section nets. That comes out to 275 000 per year. This, of course, is a rough 'guesstimate', I admit, but it still indicates a significant amount of activity. These figures also generally do not include traffic handled on packet, and that is, evidently, a very large amount too.

What sorts of messages appear on our traffic nets? That's like the question that hams get everytime we talk to non-hams, "what do you guys talk about, anyway?" Messages take a variety of forms and cover a variety of topics. Many are simply bookkeeping reports to people like net managers, section managers, and emergency coordinators. After each session that I am net control over, for example, I send a message to Jack, **WB8FSV**, net manager of the Ohio Sunrise Slow Net, and report on the number of QNIs (check-ins), QTCs (pieces of traffic), and QTRs (minutes the net lasted). This, of course is pretty mundane stuff, not really exciting or earth-shaking, but it is needed by Section Traffic Managers and others to let them know what's happening on the nets. There is a lot of more interesting stuff going through the nets as well. Many organizations regularly send traffic to members through the nets. Certain members of the QCWA, for example, send messages of greeting to that organization's members especially new members. I usually send a welcome message to new FISTS (if I can get their addresses), just to say "welcome to the group." Anyone who has hand-led traffic to any extent will recognize traffic sent by Courage Handi Hams, a group that looks after the interests of disabled radio amateurs. Members of this group regularly send out volumes of traffic to members, just to say "hi, how are you doing?", or, more often, to send a birthday or holiday greeting. There are also a number of individuals who send out messages on a regular basis to their friends. I frequently handle traffic from a YL in 'out-back' New York state who sends beautifully written short messages to one of her friends in a city close to me. I've been tempted to send her a message compli-

menting her on her style of writing. Usually her messages talk about the changing seasons, or a family get together, or a brief vignette of country living. Many people send birthday greetings to their friends and relatives. Hallmark would be out of business if they relied on people like me to send greeting cards, as I send most of my birthday and other greetings via amateur radio. The amount of traf-fic handled always rises at holiday time, especially in December. While I send out a lot of Christmas cards, I also send out a lot of Christmas and New Years messages through the NTS to friends and relatives as well.

So, you ask, what's the point? Why do so many of us spend so much time passing traffic? There are, of course, a multitude of reasons, and I'm sure that each traffic hound has his or her favorite. The best accepted of these is that traf-fic handlers use the NTS to train themselves for emergency situations. While I believe that the traffic hounds do develop operating skills that the average ham doesn't have, it is still true that few of us (including yours truly) have ever been in a situation of handling traffic that originated in an emergency zone. There are, though, other reasons or satisfactions that come from handling traffic. If you have ever delivered a MARS message from a serviceperson you may have felt the pleasure that comes from the person receiving such a message. It sounds corny, I admit, but I have had the experience of delivering such traf-fic to parents and girlfriends of military personnel, and can assure you that there is a nice feeling that comes from the recipient of the message. For cw ops, especially, there is the very real benefit of improving your operating skills that comes from regular traffic handling. I believe that this is a bene-fit that SSB operators enjoy as well, but to a limited extent. For cw ops the improvement is very real. Traffic handlers, again, particularly cw traffic hand lers, enjoy a certain camaraderie that just isn't there for many other hams. It is a feeling of belonging to a skilled group that takes pride in its work, and there is a spirit that can be felt. Fewham activities require the sort of team work that traffic does, and it is partly this feeling of being a member of a skilled team that brings a degree of satisfaction. I have, I'm sure, just touch ed the surface, and any of you who handle traffic can add your list of reasons for being involved, each of which is valid. Perhaps the greatest reason, though, is that traffic handling is.FUN. It gives a brief and regular period of intense amateur activity, requiring skill and concentration, and the rewards are great.

With that I rest my case for another month. But, I once again remind you to hop on board, check into a cw net, and send off a message to someone somewhere. Pleasant Pete at North Park is still waiting for a message, and would love to hear from you, even if it is just to complain about my rambling writing in this column. Just send your message to: Pleasant Pete — K8OUA, 5115 North Park Ave, Warren, OH 44481, telephone 216-847-0975. Till I hear from you,

73 and ARF! de Pete K8OUA

I have been working some hotel QRP lately. I usually travel to Grand Rapids, Michigan, every few months, and I pack up my MFJ 9040 and put it on the air. I have learned that when you are working QRP, you should not and cannot be in a hurry to make contacts. I have found that the best course of action is to wait and search out those "CQ's." It is amazing how a ham can pick his or her own callsign out of the back-ground noise. I believe that most Hams feel some-what obligated to respond to someone answering their CQ, and will go out of their way to make contact with a weak response to their own CQ. On the other hand, if a QRP station is calling CQ, many hams do not want to go through the hassle of trying to communicate with a weak station. After all, many hams just want a nice QSO. Sometimes, when you are working QRP, you cannot give ten or fifteen minutes of solid copy. As a result, I believe that quite often our QRP CQ's are heard but not responded to. The problem, of course, is that zero beating in on a station calling CQ and getting his or her attention prior to a QRO station coming back is a little tough with many of our QRP rigs. But, after all, that is where the operating skill comes in and that is what makes QRP exciting.

I was in Philadelphia the weekend of October 15-16. While in Philly I made it a point to go to the Franklin Science Museum and visit the Ham radio station display. The layout is quite impressive. They have HF, 2 meters, a BBS and slow and fast scan ATV. You do not even have to pay the normal \$9.00 admission fee to the Museum. Simply call up to the display (Ex-tension 1139), and the hams running the station will direct you to a business entrance, and escort you up to the station. You are then given a visitor's pass and invited to work any and all modes that the station has. I would, however, recommend that you bring a set of earphones, as it is distracting to try to work CW with the visitors talking. It was the June or January 1992 issue of QST (with Ben Franklin on the cover), that had an article about the station. I happened to re-member about the station when I was sitting in my hotel room. I made two visits to the station and made a few contacts in the time I spent there. I inadver-tantly answered a QRP contest CQ from a W7 while I was at the station. We had a short QSO anyway. W3TKQ has a TS940 and a beam that covers 40 through 10 meters, including the WARC bands. It really brings in the signals. The QRP W7 station was coming in 599. Beams really help.

I just read Vince's (WB2EZG) letter in last month Keynote. His thoughts about letting the FCC know how we feel about keeping the code requirements really are on the mark. I believe that it is time we all pulled together and got to work on a Fists position regarding the code requirements. Ham radio still pro-vides a lot of opportunity for its participants to get in-

volved in communications and electronics, and as such, it plays a vital role to the interests of the United States. I plan on letting Vince know that I will work with him to put together a message to the FCC that keeps the code requirements where are are now.

I have decided to build the one tube QRP transmitter shown in the October 1994 issue of CQ. Dave Ingram's column showed how to build it. I ordered all the parts, and now have them. I will be putting together the rig within the next month. This one tube transmitter does not use a transformer. It uses tube that costs \$3.00, so it is not very expensive to build, even if you have to buy all the parts. It is built on a piece of pine, "bread board" style. As long as you don't lean on it while you have it plugged in, you will be around to have a second QSO. Hi Hi.

73 es GL, Joe AA8HV

## PRODUCT REVIEW

### THE INSECT CW FILTER

by Mike Greenfield/N9JIY FISTS 1272

In every FISTS Newsletter there's an ad for "THE INSECT FILTER", with a British return address in the name of S. Dodson G3PPD. I like working weak-signal/QRP/poor-condx CW, and after a few swaps of mail with S. (Stuart) Dodson, I had me an INSECT filter! Fortunately, my sweet XYL accepts as a reasonable explanation, "But it's radio dear!". ....though the INSECT name just about did her in.

#### DESCRIPTION:

When I opened the box from England, I found technical specs, instructions, and diagrams galore, ....and the INSECT filter! It's housed in a sturdy black metal box 8"wide x 6.25"deep, and stands 3.5"tall. The front panel is white with black silk screened lettering. This panel sports toggle switches for power on/off, filter in/out, input impedance 8/600 Ohm, output impedance 8/600 Ohm, and one switch for directing output to a computer, etc. Audio connections are 1/4" headphone jacks on the front. A jumper came with the unit to connect it to the headphone output on my rig. This jumper had BOTH 1/4" and 1/8" plugs on it. A 7-pin DIN socket is on the back for connection to a computer, etc. Two banana plugs for 12VDC power are back there, too. There are four large control knobs on the front. These are: Input Attenuation - I use mainly to match volume of filtered and unfiltered signals, so they'll be about the same as I switch the filter in and out. Frequency - Centered at 800Hz, and adjustable -50Hz to +50Hz. Used to center the filter over the signal wanted, ...but you've

got to be close to start with! Bandwidth - Centered at 60Hz, and adjustable from 10 to 110Hz Output Attenuation - I use along with Frequency and Bandwidth knobs to tune the filter for best copy of the signal wanted.

**USING THE FILTER:** Here's what you do to use the filter. I have a rig that zero-beats a signal very near a 800Hz sidetone.

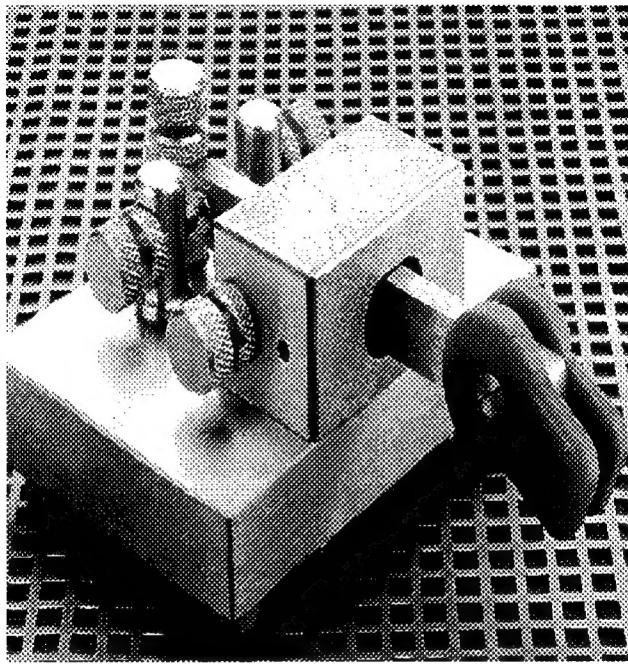
1/ Zero beat the signal wanted.

2/ Initially, set filter Input Attenuation at -5, Output Attenuation at -2, Bandwidth at 60Hz, and Frequency at 800Hz.

3/ Switch in the filter. Use the frequency control to center the filter over the signal. This is easy to hear.

4/ Alternately narrow the bandwidth, center the filter and adjust output attenuation for best copy. Now, it's hard to describe, but there's a "sweet spot" in the filter, and when you've got it right, the wanted signal jumps out of the QRN/M with a tone all it's own. Even at the narrow 10Hz bandwidth setting, other signals are heard in the background, but the signal you've "squeezed out" of the QRN/M stands out unmistakably. With weak signals you may have to adjust input attenuation before you have it right, and you may have to reduce total attenuation to where your own sidetone is too loud. In this case, just switch the filter out when you are sending. Also, as you bring the signal up, you may find you don't have it zeroed at all! You'll need to adjust rig tuning to get the signal in the filter "sweet spot". If your rig just tunes in 0.1kHz steps, you'll need to use the RIT. It's that narrow. When I used the CW-narrow filter on my rig, I got copy that was worse, not better. Also, the AGC was no help in any conditions.

**EVALUATION OF THE INSECT:** Will you hear better with an INSECT? No doubt about it. With decent received signal strength, the filter has let me begin a pleasant RST 599 ragchew, only to have the op on the other end beg off because of S-9+ QRN. When I switched the filter out, he was right! I've been able to boost to comfortable 449 copy 10meter RST-119 signals that at times could not be heard AT ALL without the filter! So, in short, I'm pretty happy with the INSECT. On the fourth-of-July, 8pm local time I pulled a 1/2-milliwatt North Carolina station out of the mud. For QRPers who want to hear as well as transmit weak signals, I'd say it is almost a must. The new digital filters might be easier to operate, but I can't imagine them working any better, especially with weak signals, ....and they pull ten-times the current. Finally, I did peek inside the INSECT enclosure. Parts arrangement is super neat, and no corners are cut! The board is double sided glass. Metal stand-offs and supports are used in abundance, and believe it or not, wiring is bundled and laced where-ever possible! If you want an INSECT of your own, Mr. Dodson says he will accept from US FISTS members personal checks for \$149 US dollars. He'll handle the exchange on his end, and pay shipping out of this. Pretty swell!



Photograph of the Jones single lever paddle courtesy of G3TUX

## CORRECTION

In last month's product review of the MFJ Pocket Morse Tutor by Bill **W8ZNH** a line was left out of a sentence in the fourth paragraph. It should read: "If you use the 'Tutor' enough to memorize the "over 500" words therein at say, 20 WPM, you should have no trouble qualifying for the Extra Class code test. And for advanced CW fans, the "Word Recognition Mode (TM)" at 35 or 40 is real fun!". Sri Bill!

## ANY ALUMNI?

Bob **N2NTO** wonders if any of the club members were in the ARMY school for C.W. back in the months of January, February, and March 1959 at Fort Dix Specialist Training Regiment. It was a school for intermediate speed C.W. Radio Operators. If you were there, drop Bob a line, he'd like to find some long lost buddies!

## NEWS FROM RENEWALS

Jiggs **WA0FGV** reports there were a record number of tourists in his Black Hills, SD area, but it's back to normal now. He operated a Special Event Station from on top of Crazy Horse Mountain a couple weeks ago.

Olive **VE7ERA** has had an extremely busy year since her book was published in mid-January. She has attended library tea in her honor, been doing after dinner guest speaking and interviews on Canadian radio shows, in addition to answering all the fan letters! She sends her regards to FISTS members and is battening down the hatches for the first onslaught of BC winter.

Pete **NU6Q** regrets he can't spend more time on

FISTS activities. His engineering assignment with FEMA, working on the Loma Prieta earthquake recovery effort in San Francisco (still, after nearly five years), keeps him very busy all week, including a two hour commute every day. He's looking forward to the day when this "temporary" assignment is over and he can do some serious CW work.

Frank **ND9X** is now on the day shift at work, so he plans on being on the air more often. FB Frank!

Carl **KR4VQ** is so dedicated he has a dipole strung up in his living room so he can get back on the QSO Parties.

## AWARDS

The votes have been tabulated and the Straight Key Week winners are:

**DON KC4OCS: 1994 N.A. FIST of the Year**  
**MAGGIE NP2GP: 1994 FISTS Ragchewer of the Year**

Don received the most votes for Best Fist Heard, and Maggie sent in the log with the most QSOs! Congrats to these fine FISTS members and appropriate certificates are on their way.

## SUNDAY QSO PARTY LOG

Don **KC4UUG** sends this report for the September Sunday QSO Party:

Sept 4: Bad thunderstorm at **KC4UUG**, so Maggie **NP2GP** took control and ran most of the party. Condx good. Check-ins include: **NP2GP**, **N4VEF**, **KC4OCS**, **KD4FLO** (non-FIST), **G0HIS**, **GX0IPX**, **W2WOE**, **N7CFA**, **VY2RB**, **UA1ATK** (non-FIST), **G0MGO**.

Sept 11: Noise, QSB, and weak signals. Check-ins: **KC4OCS**, **NP2GP**, **W2WOE**, **WA0FGV**, **KD4FLO**, **KR4VQ**, **AA0IQ**, **W4TWK** (non-FIST), **VY2RB**.

Sept 18: Rapid skip changes and QRM. Check-ins: **KD4DDI** (non-FIST), **AA0IQ**, **KD4OYA/m**, **NA8G**, **WZ8C**, **ON4JR** (non-FIST), **VY2RB**.

Sept 25: Conditions good. Check-ins: **NP2GP**, **KD4FLO**, **N4VEF**, **W08E**, **N2NTO**, **KC4OCS**, **N8FU**, **NP2DJ**, **KR4VQ**, **W4TWK**, **PS7PY** (non-FIST).

Thanks Don!! You are doing a super job with the Sunday Party.

Don't forget to send your QSL cards and SASE to John **N8FU** for use in the FISTS QSL Buro. Save postage!

Also, remember the Saturday Morning QSO Party with Maggie **NP2GP** as hostess, and the Thursday 30 Meter Party at 8pm EST on 10.117 with Don **KC4OCS**.

Pete **W2WSS** invites everyone who can hear the Empire Slow Speed CW Traffic and Training Net he manages, to check in. It meets daily on 3.590KHz at 6:00pm EST.

## NEW COAST GUARD CLUB

I thought this might be of interest to some of our FISTS since I know some of you were involved with the US Coast Guard. I received an offer to run an article about FISTS in a new newsletter printed by Don **AD4PT**. He started an informal Coast Guard Club of ham operators who are serving or have served in the Coast Guard, regular or reserves. They have 207 members to date. If this sounds like something you would be interested in, get in touch with RMCS Don Gardner, USCG Retired, 3908 Briarwood Ave, High Point NC 27265-1204.

### MORE FEEDBACK

Re: Ur blurb in the KeyNote about teaching code classes. I'm only 65 years old so I have another 100 years before I learn to keep my mouth shut.

A 'lil info first that you may or may not know. Only 1 1/2 to 2 percent of the general public cannot learn code. Physical, mental and neurotic reasons I suppose. People that are artistically inclined learn faster than those in logic mode, engineers etc.

Human nature being what it is, when teaching you are faced with whiners, complainers, excuse makers, inferiority complexes, and other assorted nayer-dowells. So before starting a class it may do you well to find out a 'lill about your students. You cannot assume because they have shown up that they are willing to accept responsibility for their shortcomings even though they have expressed a desire to learn code.

I would think if a few facts were mentioned to them and that you will only accept a no-nonsense approach simply because you are giving of your time and energy to teach them another language. You may also mention that foreign speaking hams must first learn English to become proficient in code. (A 'lil guilt trip never hoits).

I would set periods of time to practice at least 15 minutes duration, during your classes and not deviate. And hour and a half class with 4 15 minute periods of code copy seems reasonable.

It may seem cruel but you would weed out the no-very-serious tyro's among them, which is only a waste of your time anyway. They'll come back at another time when they're more serious or realize their peers are getting ahead of them. Competition breeds proficiency. FRC motto, hi.

What you will be up against the no-code school of thinking and the "I'll never use this anyway" dipsy's.

I have found that if the student is told to write down something for teach character regardless of right or wrong, they learn from their mistakes faster. Leave 'no blank spaces on the practice paper. This jump-starts their mind to a faster pace. It's too easy on them to leave a blank space and it becomes habit forming if allowed to continue. So therefore longer to learn.

Among my fly-on-the-wall listening at local ham clubs and on 2 meter fone among CW tyro's, I sometimes could go into a catatonic frenzy just listening to the excuses they give one another for not being more proficient in CW. People need to be challenged to excel. The no-nonsense approach is a challenge and once they see their progress the hanging party attitude toward the instructor dissolves. Replaced with pride and gratitude. I think too many instructors want to be liked rather than teach.

I, os course, was fortunate learning the code at age 10, from a relative who was a pre-WW2 Army Radio Operator and honing my CW skills for 5 years as a Navy Radio Op. Altho I waited 41 years before getting my ham ticket, I had no trouble passing the 20 WPM test before I received my Novice ticket. While in Novice class I was taken back by the VE's approach to learning code. The students were told if they didn't know a character to leave a blank space and go on, and that 15 minutes a day was enough practice. (Any more than that would tend to confuse them) I think if that attitude prevailed when I learned I would still be at 7 wpm, hi!

I suppose I sound something of a martinet, but in the end the small percentage of those that pass 20 WPM and go on to use it will be welcome on the low-end, and enter into a unique world brotherhood. Populated by goofy's like me, but nevertheless unique.

Don't know if my 'lil diatribe helped you or not Nancy, but you gave me a perfect opening to use my soapbox. Thanks for the opportunity my friend.

I would like you to use my name and call to your students, telling them of the pride the will experience from their new found ability and the friends they will make worldwide which in their older years as a ham will stand them in good stead. (A 'lil stroke to the pride can't hoit either, hi)

### 73, Cliff N2PLE

Thanks so much for taking the time to give your input Cliff, as always it is great to hear from you. You made some good points, I tend to be in that group of too lenient code instructors who want to be liked. Until I get fed up with them and blow my top anyway, hi!

### WELCOME TO NEW FISTS

**#1498 N1DWA** Cliff is from Mass, sponsored by N1SWA and enjoys QRP and music.

**#1508 WD8OCV** Don from Ohio was sponsored by N9JIY. His main rig is an FT-101EE. His antennas are a 15 meter beam end fed for 160 meters and Vee's.

**#1509 KA1ZVX** Wes from Maine, sponsored by N1DNM enjoys sailing, reading and woodworking.

**#1510 WB8QZK** Craig from Ohio found out about FISTS in Dayton at the Hamvention.

**#1511 KB8KEJ** Cher from MI, sponsored by N8RXW enjoys reading, mountain biking, camping and is turning part of her 5 acres back to nature, which is enjoyed by a dozen wild pheasants who hang around.

**#1512 KD4DDI** Paul from Virginia, sponsored by KC4UUG enjoys model railroad (HO)& computers.

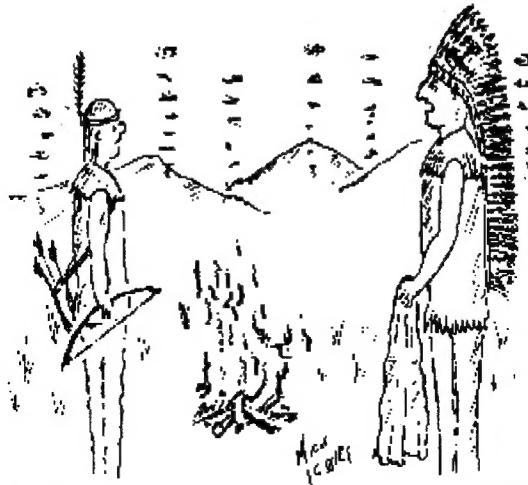
#1513 VP2VI Bob from USVI, sponsored by NP2GP enjoys jazz and antique cars. I think we will soon have all the CW ops in the USVI as FISTS tnx to Maggie!

#1514 AD4PT Don from North Carolina sponsored by WZ8C is an ardent Anglophile and founded the Coast Guard club mentioned earlier in the Memo.

#1515 N8JIW Don from Ohio sponsored by K8OUA says he "loves CW and wants to learn". He likes packet, RTTY and SWL-ing. He also is an attorney for the ARRL.

#1516 WX4S Ed from Tennessee found out about FISTS from some messages I left on the HamNet Forum on CompuServe. He also enjoys rock climbing and computers, hobby and professional.

#1517 WB4WNO Steve from Florida, sponsored by WB2FXK enjoys scuba diving, boating and computers



*I don't like nets. I only join to give 'em a few points*  
(acknowledgement RNARS news letter and G0IEI)

## The Insect Filter

A variable bandwidth filter with a very narrow bandpass. Ideal for weak signals and poor band conditions. SAE for further details and special FISTS prices to:

S. Dodson.  
G3PPD

The Haven, Lound Rd.,  
BLUNDESTON,  
NR32 5AT  
Tel: 0502 732322

### CLASSIFIEDS

**WANTED** - HRO-7 Coils, Any Frequency - One or many. Will pay your price and shipping. Pse contact Arnie Chick - WK1H, P.O. Box 385, Auburn, ME 04212 or call collect 1-(207)-786-4267

**WANTED** - Kenwood TS-811 or TR-851A, any condition. Also Hi-Pwr Amps for 6mtr 2mtr 70cm bands in 800 to 1500 W range and correspondance with anyone having any experience with EME and multiple Yagi

arrays. Pse contact N8IAG Brian LaFontaine, 3050 Rochester Rd. Dryden MI. 48428. Phone 1-(810)-796-2384 or packet at KF8JS@NEMI or Compuserve.

**FOR SALE** - Bill W8ZNH has a 'TUNER-TUNER" by Palomar for sale. It is hardly used and price is negotiable.

**FOR SALE** - Brian AA2LK also has a "Tuner-Tuner" for sale, sri I don't have info on the other item Brian, I tried phoning, but you were out of town. Contact Brian at Box 1359, Lockport NY 14095.

**WANTED: K9VKY** Brian is looking for comments, suggestions and source of a military xmtr/xctr suitable for use on 30 meters for the USS REQUIN restoration project. Write K9VKY 3068 Evergreen Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237 or phone (412) 931-4646.



## Morsum Magnificat

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### FINAL

Well, I think that's it for this month FISTS, but I have the feeling I've forgotten something. I think I am still on jet lag from my trip to Phoenix last week, hi! I am so encouraged by the positive comments about the way the Newsletter is looking, I'm very glad you are enjoying it. I have a wonderful time writing it, I appreciate all your letters/ comments/ phone calls! Please keep the Product Reviews and Feedbacks coming in. As well as news of your accomplishments and activities. Any Special Event stations coming up? How are your ham classes going? Worked any Novices lately? Spend some time in the Novice bands - Be an Elmer! Happy Thanksgiving - I'm thankful for the wonderful FISTS family we've created & CW forever!

73/88/33 de Nancy WZ8C

PS: I am WAY behind on issuing membership certs, pse be patient, they are in the works.

# FISTS C.W. CLUB

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Call ..... Name on air .....

Full Name and Address .....

"ZIP + 4" PSC !

The following information would help provide a synopsis of members' working conditions

Current rig(s) ..... Other interests .....

Antennas .....

Other Affiliations (RSGB etc) .....

Birthdate ..... Are you visually handicapped ? .....

Please enclose annual subs \$ 15<sup>00</sup> (U.S. funds)

Date ..... 19 94

Signature .....

Your Sponsor .....

Return to:  
Ms. Nancy Kott (WZ8C)  
P.O. Box 47  
Hadley, MI 48440-0047  
USA

Please make checks payable to FISTS C.W. CLUB

The rate for your country due to the cost of air-mail is ..... sterling. I appreciate the cost of Banker drafts etc. and it is with this in mind that WZ8C is nominated as banker for the convenience of VE, US and other members on the American continent. Your subs when due may also be paid via this source.